



City of Newport News

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMMISSION

KARL R. DAHLEN
VICE CHAIRMAN

STEPHEN W. KLUTE
CHAIRMAN

DAVID T. WILKINSON
SECRETARY-COORDINATOR

February 9, 2014

To: The Honorable City Council

From: Chairman, Newport News Transportation Safety Commission

Subject: 2014 Annual Report

The Transportation Safety Commission consists of thirteen (13) appointed voting members and four (4) additional nonvoting members with technical expertise in various transportation related fields.

The Commission meets quarterly (February, May, August, and November) in a pre-determined location, typically the Department of Engineering Conference room on the 7th floor at City Hall. The meetings are open to the public and citizen input is encouraged. Contact persons are the Secretary-Coordinator, David T. Wilkinson (926-8690) or the Chairman, Mr. Stephen Klute (877-0182).

Expansion of Previous Accomplishments

- The Commission formed a committee to review the benefits of internally illuminated street name signs. A report was prepared and approved by the Commission that included the safety benefits of having internally illuminated street name signs at key decision intersections as it aids in advance visibility of cross streets to drivers unfamiliar with the City. Given the influx of new residences and commuters through base realignment, City attractions and City development, a memo to the Director of Engineering for the City was presented that showed the benefits to such devices and made a recommendation to incorporate them at key intersections within the City of Newport News. Based on this recommendation, the Department reviewed the options available for internally illuminated street name signs and established a pilot program to review the use of LED edge lighting technology. The pilot installation was completed in the fall of 2012 at the intersection of Warwick Boulevard and Bland Boulevard. The approximate cost for this project was \$10,000 and supplied from the City's operating budget. The overall recommendation was to provide these devices at 23 total intersections. **The commission strongly encourages City Council to look at the pilot location and support efforts to continue funding this endeavor as well as direct City management to continue implementing this program.** A copy of the Commission's report is available upon request if you would like additional information.

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Summary of FY2014 Activities and Accomplishments

- Normally the members of the Commission would have attended the annual Virginia Military Civilian Transportation Safety Workshop at Fort Eustis in November. The hi-lites of this workshop includes a review of Transportation bills pending before the next General Assembly meeting in Richmond. This year the meeting was canceled when Army sponsorship was withdrawn.
- A major initiative for the Commission is to review pending safety issues as it relates to state legislation. Like our motto, ***“Safety is never an afterthought... it is planned for”***, so we believe is good transportation safety legislation. It is understood that General Assembly is currently in session and with that the Commission would like to identify possible legislative issues that we have reviewed and voted to endorse as primary concerns for the residents of Newport News, for either consideration now or as the Council moves forward over the next 12 months.
 1. Enact a primary enforcement safety belt law by all occupants
 2. Add back seat passengers required to Seat Belt use law
 3. Support the current Motorcycle Helmet use law
 4. Ban the use of all hand held technology while operating a motor vehicle
(Note that such a ban already is law for drivers of commercial carriers)
 5. Require that every school bus purchased after January 1, 2016 be equipped with seat belts for each seat

The commission strongly encourages City Council to support any currently proposed legislation that deals with these topics. It is further recommended to continue to push for future legislation to be introduced to the General Assembly for the next session if not passed during this session.

- As part of the Safety Commission FY2014 Goals and Initiatives, Secretary Wilkinson developed a Driver Distraction Informational Tips/Safety Brochure for inclusion into the Commission's web page.

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- The Commission formed a committee to review the City's existing policy on commercial entrance spacing requirements to intersections. Based on this report, a memo was prepared to the Director of Engineering recommending modifications be made to the Newport News Design Criteria Manual such that for future cases of new construction and certain redevelopment projects, guidelines similar to those used by the city of Memphis may be invoked.
- The Commission donated \$500 to the City's "Every 15 Minutes" campaign against students drinking and driving.
- During the 2014 fiscal year, the Commission has received briefings from the Engineering and Police Departments on the transportation safety aspects of major upgrades to our City streets. These briefings included the City's Multi-Modal Station and top intersections and non-intersections for collisions. From these briefings we are moving forward with the FY2015 Commission's Goals and Initiatives.
- The Commission continued the City Employee Transportation Safety Award program. Three (3) city employees will receive awards at a presentation in May for their actions relating to transportation safety.

Looking forward to the rest of FY2015, Current Goals and Initiatives

- The Commission formed a committee to review recommendations for a Bicycle Friendly City Plan.

The Commission is eagerly looking forward to serving City Council and the citizens of Newport News this year. We are on track to complete the FY15 initiatives as well as defining initiatives for FY2016. As always if there is a special area of transportation safety or concerns that Council would like this commission to review and provide recommendations regarding, please let me know.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen W. Klute, Chairman

SWK/dtw*:

pc: City Clerk
City Manager

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